يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ (سورة النساء 59)

FOLLOWING (TAQLEED) THE FOUR IMAMS & STATUS OF IMAM ABU HANIFAH

WRITTEN BY:
DR. MAULANA MOHAMMAD NAJEEB QASMI

EDITED BY:
ADNAN MAHMOOD RASHEED USMANI

www.najeebqasmi.com



يٰاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اَطِيْعُوا اللّٰهَ وَاَطِيْعُوا

الرَّسُوْلَ وَاُولِى الْاَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ

(سُوْرَةُ النِّسَاء 59)

Following (Taqleed) the four Imams & Status of Imam Abu Hanifah

(The Method of Performing Umrah)

Written by:

Dr. Maulana Mohammad Najeeb Qasmi

Edited by:

Adnan Mahmood Rasheed Usmani

www.najeebqasmi.com

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Following (Taqleed) the four Imams & Status of Imam Abu Hanifah

By Dr. Muhammad Najeeb Qasmi

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First Urdu Edition: May 2015
First English Edition: March 2016

Published by:
Freedom Fighter Maulana Ismail Sambhali Welfare Society, Deepa Sarai, Sambhal, UP, India

Address for Gratis Distribution:
Dr. Muhammad Mujeeb, Deepa Sarai,
P.O. Sambhal, UP (Pin Code 2044302) India

Contents

Preface

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْم

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِيْن،وَالصَّلاۃ وَالسَّلامُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ الْكَرِيم وَعَلىٰ آله وَاَصْحَابه اَجْمَعِيْن۔

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) came with a universal message. His message was not restricted to a certain tribe or a nation. It was not meant for a limited period either. Rather the message he was shouldered with was general and timeless.

After the departure of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) from this world, entire Muslim Ummah, in general, and Ulama, in particular, were entrusted with the noble responsibility of preserving that eternal message of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and passing it on to the subsequent generations. So the interpreters of the Qur'an and scholars of Hadith and Fiqh of different eras have served Islam using the best available resources at their times.

Modern technologies such as websites, WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube and mobile apps are being used currently for sharing Islamic messages and spreading teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). But it needs to be accelerated to maximize the advantages of these technologies.

Some of my sincere friends extended their technical and financial support to me so that I may also take my part in service of Islam by using modern technologies. Our team launched our website (www.najeebqasmi.com) in 2013 and two mobile applications (Deen-e-Islam and Hajj-e-Mabroor) in 3 languages in 2015. 18 Ulamas of India and Pakistan and different Islamic institutions have given their reviews about these two apps appreciating the glorious efforts made by me and my team in bringing out such Islamic apps.

While preparing these apps, my articles (around 200) were translated into English and Hindi languages. They were edited

by the experts. Hindi translations of the said articles are simple and easy to understand.

By the grace of Allah, English and Hindi translations of these articles have been compiled into 14 books in each language according to subject, totaling them to 28 books in all. Apart from this, seven books were written earlier in Urdu. Nine more books are being compiled in Urdu. These books are collections of various articles which were published in newspapers and magazines at different times.

There have always been questions concerning Taqlid or following a certain leading Islamic jurist and much as already been written on this topic. In current book, “Following (Taqleed) the four Imams & Status of Imam Abu Hanifah” I treid to summarize issues on of following the four sects (Fiqh) of Islam and replied to the objections raised by the Ghayr Muqallidin concerning Taqlid of the Imams.

I pray to Allah to accept this small effort made by me with the sole intention of serving Islam. I also pray to Allah for the scholars who wrote encouraging reviews, well-wishers who provided their technical and financial support for this project, translators, editors and designers.

Special thanks to Hazrat Maulana Abul Qasim Numani (Muhtamim of Darul Uloom Deoband), Maulana Mohammad Asrarul Haque Qasmi, M.P. (India) and Professor Akhtar Alwasey (Ex-director of Zakir Hussain Institute of Islamic Studies) for their valuable reviews on the books.

I also express special gratitude to Mr. Adnan Mahmood Usmani for editing these books and to Dr. Shafa’atullah Khan for his consistent support throughout this project.

Mohammad Najeeb Qasmi, Riyadh
01-06-1437 = 10-03-2016

Foreward

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful
Praise be to Allah, Peace and blessings of Allah be upon His Messenger, Muhammad, and all his family and companions.

We are living in an age of tremendous cataclysm and uncertainty. People everywhere are groping anxiously for something that can save humanity, which has lost its way and is on the brink of unprecedented disaster. It is also true to say that we live in an era of the ultimate material civilization and progress, but in terms of values and morals, mankind appears to be diminishing day by day. Islam claims to provide answers and solutions, ones which are compatible with reason, logic, and the realities of the human life, In Islam, there are no obscure or mysterious things that we have only to believe without being allowed to ask about them. It is the Qur'an, Hadith and Sunnah which provide answers in convincing, conclusive and incomparable style.

Dr Najeeb Qasmi wrote many articles on contemporary issues and tried to guide humanity to the right path. But all his articles were limited to Urdu language and it was required to translate his work into English to convey the teachings of Islam to a broader horizon. The task of translating and editing into English at individual articles level and then compiling them into 14 volumes was an arduous one but with the blessing of Almighty Allah, I was able to accomplish this task within the specific time and I am thankful to my family for all their cooperation. Without their kind support it would not have been possible to complete it in time.

May Allah accept our efforts to spread the message of Islam and guide us all to the right path.

Adnan Mahmood Usmani
Consulting Editor
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
16 March, 2016, 6 Jumada' II, 1437

(Mufti) Abul Qasim Nomani
Mohtamim (VC) Darul Uloom Deoband

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Ref. No.......... Date:..... ....

باسمہ سبحانہ وتعالیٰ

جناب مولانا محمد نجیب قاسمی سنبھلی مقیم ریاض (سعودی عرب) نے دینی معلومات اور شرعی احکام کو زیادہ سے زیادہ اہل ایمان تک پہونچانے کے لئے جدید وسائل کا استعمال شروع کرکے، دینی کام کرنے والوں کے لیے ایک اچھی مثال قائم فرمائی ہے۔

چنانچہ سعودی عرب سے شائع ہونے والے اردو اخبار (اردو نیوز) کے دینی کالم (روشنی) میں مختلف عنوانات پر ان کے مضامین مسلسل شائع ہوتے رہتے ہیں۔ اور موبائل ایپ اور ویب سائٹ کے ذریعہ بھی وہ اپنا دینی پیغام زیادہ سے زیادہ لوگوں تک پہونچا رہے ہیں۔

ایک اچھا کام یہ ہوا ہے کہ زمانہ کی ضرورت کے تحت مولانا نے اپنے اہم اور منتخب مضامین کے ہندی اور انگریزی میں ترجمے کرادیئے ہیں، جو الیکٹرونک بک کی شکل میں جلد ہی لانچ ہونے والے ہیں۔

اور امید ہے کہ مستقبل میں یہ پرنٹ بک کی شکل میں بھی دستیاب ہوں گے۔

اللہ تعالیٰ مولانا قاسمی کے علوم میں برکت عطا فرمائے اور ان کی خدمات کو قبول فرمائے۔ مزید علمی افادات کی توفیق بخشے۔

ابوالقاسم نعمانی غفرلہ
مہتمم دارالعلوم دیوبند
۱۴۳۷/۶/۳ھ

Reflections

Maulana Mohammad Najeeb Qasmi, current resident of Saudi Arabia, made a great accomplishment of conveying Islamic information to the believers by using modern technologies. It, in fact, serves a good example for those who are working in the religious field.

His articles dealing with diverse Islamic subjects have been regularly published in Saudi Arabia based Newspaper, “Urdu News”. He has been serving Islam through his Mobile applications and website which he launched to spread message of Islam to a larger group of humanity. Recently, he got all his important articles translated into English and Hindi languages which are going to be launched in the form of electronic books. I hope these collections will be published in future in print edition as well.

May Allah bless Maulana Qasmi with more barakah in his knowledge and grant acceptance to his works.

Abul Qasim Nomani
Mohtamim of Darul Uloom Deoband
03-06-1437 = 13-03-2016

مولانا محمد اسرار الحق قاسمی

Mohammad Asrarul Haque

Member of Parliament
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Date: 19/03/2016

تاثرات

عصر حاضر میں دینی تعلیمات کو جدید آلات و وسائل کے ذریعہ عوام الناس تک پہنچانا وقت کا اہم تقاضہ ہے، اللہ کا شکر ہے کہ بعض دینی، معاشرتی اور اصلاحی فکر رکھنے والے حضرات نے اس سمت میں کام کرنا شروع کر دیا ہے، جس کے سبب آج انٹرنیٹ پر دین کے تعلق سے کافی مواد موجود ہے۔ اگرچہ اس میدان میں زیادہ تر مغربی ممالک کے مسلمان سرگرم ہیں لیکن اب ان کے نقش قدم پر چلتے ہوئے مشرقی ممالک کے علماء و داعیان اسلام بھی اس طرف متوجہ ہو رہے ہیں جن میں عزیزم ڈاکٹر محمد نجیب قاسمی صاحب کا نام سرفہرست ہے۔ وہ انٹرنیٹ پر بہت سا دینی مواد ڈال چکے ہیں، باضابطہ طور پر ایک اسلامی و اصلاحی ویب سائٹ بھی چلاتے ہیں۔

ڈاکٹر محمد نجیب قاسمی کا قلم رواں دواں ہے۔ وہ اب تک مختلف اہم موضوعات پر سینکڑوں مضامین اور کئی کتابیں لکھ چکے ہیں۔ ان کے مضامین پوری دنیا میں بڑی دلچسپی کے ساتھ پڑھے جاتے ہیں۔ وہ جدید ٹکنالوجی سے بخوبی واقف ہونے کی وجہ سے اپنے مضامین اور کتابوں کو بہت جلد دنیا بھر میں ایسے ایسے لوگوں تک پہنچا دیتے ہیں جن تک رسائی آسان کام نہیں ہے۔ موصوف کی شخصیت علوم دینی کے ساتھ علوم عصری سے بھی آراستہ ہے۔ وہ ایک طرف عالم دین ہیں، تو دوسری طرف ڈاکٹر و محقق بھی اور کئی زبانوں میں مہارت بھی رکھتے ہیں اور اس پر مستزاد یہ کہ وہ فعال و متحرک نوجوان ہیں۔ جس طرح وہ اردو، ہندی، انگریزی اور عربی میں دینی و اصلاحی مضامین اور کتابیں لکھ کر عوام کے سامنے لا رہے ہیں، وہ اس کے لئے تحسین اور مبارک باد کے مستحق ہیں۔ ان کی شب و روز کی مصروفیات و جد و جہد کو دیکھتے ہوئے ان سے یہ امید کی جا سکتی ہے کہ وہ مستقبل میں بھی اسی مستعدی کے ساتھ مذکورہ تمام کاموں کو جاری رکھیں گے۔ میں دعا گو ہوں کہ باری تعالیٰ ان سے مزید دینی، اصلاحی اور علمی کام لے اور وہ اکابرین کے نقش قدم پر گامزن رہیں۔ آمین!

مخلص

(مولانا) محمد اسرار الحق قاسمی

ایم. پی. لوک-سبھا (انڈیا)

و صدر آل انڈیا تعلیمی و ملی فاؤنڈیشن، نئی دہلی

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Reflections

In the present era, modern technologies are very effective tools to spread one's ideology. I appreciate that some Islamic scholars already took initiative to create religious awareness in the Muslim society using these new technologies. We can find wide range of Islamic information already available at internet. Majority of those scholars are from Western countries. Now Ulama of Eastern countries are following their footsteps. Dr. Mohammad Najeeb Qasmi is one of them. He has already created his own Islamic website.

Dr. Mohammad Najeeb Qasmi is a religious scholar and researcher. He has written many articles and books on various Islamic topics which are read by a massive number of people throughout the world. His knowledge and understanding of innovative technologies assists him to convey his messages to Muslim community in the world. His efforts to bring his articles and books in Urdu, Hindi and English languages are admirable. We expect that his enthusiasm towards serving Islam will continue in the future. May Allah bless Dr. Qasmi with more knowledge of Islam.

(Maulana) Mohammad Asrarul Haque Qasmi

M.P. (India)

President of All India Education & Social Foundation – New Delhi

प्रो. अख़्तरूल वासे
आयुक्त
PROF. AKHTARUL WASEY
Commissioner

सत्यमेव जयते

भाषाजात अल्पसंख्यकों के आयुक्त
अल्पसंख्यक कार्य मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार
Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities in India
Ministry of Minority Affairs
Government of India

تقریظ

اطلاعاتی انقلاب برپا ہونے کے بعد جس طرح ہر قسم کی معلومات انٹرنیٹ کے ذریعہ آنکھوں کی دو پتلیوں میں سماگئی ہیں۔ اس نے ''گاگر میں ساگر'' اور ''کوزے میں دریا'' کے تخیلاتی تصورات کو نہ صرف حقیقت بنادیا ہے بلکہ ان پر ہمارا انحصار روز بروز ناگزیر ہوتا جارہا ہے۔ گوگل (Google) ہو یا وکی پیڈیا (Wikipaedia) یا پھر دوسری سوشل سائنس انہوں نے ترسیل وابلاغ کو وہ ہمہ جہت رخ اور رفتار کی تیزی عطا کی ہے کہ فراق وفصل کے تمام تصورات بے معنی ہوکر رہ گئے ہیں۔ لیکن اس اطلاعاتی انقلاب نے ایک پیچیدہ مسئلہ یہ پیدا کردیا ہے کہ اطلاعات رسائی اور خبروں تک رسائی میں حقائق سے گریز یا ان کو مسخ کرنے کا چلن بھی اس طرح شامل ہوگیا ہے اور اس سچائی کو اسلام اور مسلمانوں سے بہتر کون جانتا ہے۔ دوسرا سنگین مسئلہ یہ ہے کہ باخبر ہونے اور معلومات حاصل کرنے کے لئے اب مطالعہ کی عادت لوگوں میں خاصی کم ہوتی جا رہی ہے۔ کیونکہ موبائیل کے روپ میں دنیا ان کی مٹھی میں سمائی رہتی ہے اور وہ سب کچھ اسی کے ذریعہ جاننا چاہتے ہیں۔ اس چیلنج اور مسئلے کے حل کے لئے ضروری ہے کہ ہم غلط بیانیوں اور حقائق کو دنیا پر آشکار کرنے کے لئے اور اپنے ہم مذہبوں خاص طور پر نئی نسل کو صحیح معلومات فراہم کرنے، انہیں رہنمائی دینے اور ان کے شعور میں بالیدگی اور پختگی لانے کے لئے اس اطلاعاتی انقلاب کے جتنے بھی وسائل وذرائع ہیں ان کا بھرپور استعمال کریں۔

مجھے خوشی ہے کہ ہمارے ایک موقر اور معتبر عالم حضرت دین مولانا محمد نجیب قاسمی نے جو از ہر ہند دارالعلوم دیوبند کے قابل فخر ابنائے قدیم میں سے ہیں اور عرصہ سے مملکت سعودی عرب کی راجدھانی ریاض میں برسرکار ہیں، انہوں نے اس ضرورت کو بخوبی سمجھا اور دنیا کی پہلی اسلامی موبائیل ایپ ''دین اسلام'' اور ''حج مبرور'' اردو، انگریزی اور ہندی میں تیار کیا تھا اور اب وقت گزرنے کے ساتھ نئے سوالات کی روشنی اور علمی ضرورتوں کے تحت نئے مضامین اور نئے بیانات شامل کرکے ایک دفعہ پھر نئے انداز کے ساتھ پیش کرنے جارہے ہیں۔ مزید برآں زندگی کے مختلف پہلوؤں پر دین کے حوالہ سے دوسو مضامین کے الیکٹرونک ایڈیشن کو بھی منظر عام پر لایا جارہا ہے۔ مجھے وقتاً فوقتاً محترم مولانا محمد نجیب قاسمی صاحب کے مقالے، الیکٹرانک مضامین اور علمی فتوحات سے استفادہ کرنے کا موقعہ ملتا رہا ہے۔ مجھے ان کے متوازن، اعتدال پسند اور عالمانہ انداز تحریر نے ہمیشہ متاثر کیا۔ میں مولانا نجیب قاسمی کی خدمت میں ہدیۂ تبریک وتشکر پیش کرتا ہوں اور خدا سے دعا کرتا ہوں کہ وہ ان کی عمر میں درازی، علم میں اضافہ اور قلم میں مزید پختگی عطا فرمائے۔ کیونکہ:

ستاروں سے آگے جہاں اور بھی ہیں
ابھی عشق کے امتحاں اور بھی ہیں

(پروفیسر اختر الواسع)
سابق ڈائریکٹر: ذاکر حسین انسٹی ٹیوٹ آف اسلامک اسٹڈیز
سابق صدر: شعبۂ اسلامک اسٹڈیز جامعہ ملیہ اسلامیہ، نئی دہلی
سابق وائس چیرمین: اردو اکادمی، دہلی

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Reflections

The revolution of information technology has provided easy access to all kinds of information. Maxims like "Ocean in a pot" does not seem to be an imagination anymore. Our dependence on the technology is increasing. Google, Wikipedia and other social websites are the fastest tools of information and communication. But this abundance of information has created confusion. Instead of conveying truth to people, it is being used to spread distorted reality. This is harming Islam and Muslim mostly. Second major issue is that internet has affected the habit of book reading. In such scenario, we need a positive use of these resources of information, so that we can expose the truth to people and guide the Muslim community especially young generation to the right path.

I am glad that our respected scholar Maulana Muhammad Najeeb Qasmi who is one of the alumni of Darul Uloom Deoband and has been residing in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia for quite a long time felt this need. He launched the first Islamic mobile application "Deen-e-Islam" and "Hajj-e-Mabroor" in Urdu, Hindi and English languages. Considering the needs of time, he is again presenting it with the addition of new articles and speeches. Moreover, he is going to launch electronic edition of two hundred articles on different religious aspects. I often read his electronic articles. His moderate and scholarly articles always touch me. I express my gratitude to Maulana Najeeb Qasmi and pray for his long life to Allah. May Allah bless him with more knowledge.

Professor Akhtarul Wasey
Ex - Director of Zakir Husain Institute of Islamic Studies
Ex - Head of Islamic Studies Department,
Jamia Millia Islamia – New Delhi
Ex - Vice Chairman of Urdu Academy – Delhi

1. Following any of the four Imams is nothing but following the Qur'an and Sunnah

Though much has been written on the topic by able scholars of the Ummah yet while going through a concise and comprehensive writing on the issue by my late grandfather Shaykh al-Ḥadith Mawlana Muḥammad Isma'il al-Sanbhali (1899-1975), may Allah have mercy on him, I felt it to summarize the issue in view of the pressing need of our time, keeping in mind the busy life we all have been accustomed to these days. The way the Ghair Muqallidin have been creating doubts in people's mind concerning Taqlid or following a certain leading Islamic jurist has indeed created much confusion and discord among the common Muslims. May Allah guide us to avoid wasting our energies in secondary issues and help us instead to restore integrity and unity among the Ummah. In a time when Islam and Muslims are under rapid attack by the enemies of Islam from all sides, the Ummah needs be united against all the anti-Islamic godless forces to defend Islam.

As for difference of opinion concerning jurisprudential issues, it has never been an issue to fight about as we find it existed in the very beginning among the first generation of Islam. As reported, the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) during the expedition of al-Aḥzab asked a group of the Companions to leave for Banu Quraiẓah right away directing them to offer 'Aṣr Ṣalah there. But they could not make it and when the end time for 'Aṣr drew near in the midway, there happened a difference of opinion between

the Companions whether they should pray ‘Aṣr before the time ends or should carry on and offer the prayer only after reaching Banu Qurayẓah. Divided into two groups, one said that they should not pray before reaching the destination even if they had to offer it as Qaḍa’ for having missed to pray it on time because the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) instructed them to do so while the other opined that the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) didn’t mean that they miss the prayer if they could not make it to Banu Qurayẓah before the time of Aṣr ends; he only meant that they should try to reach as fast as to catch ‘Aṣr in the destination. Thus one group offered the prayer on their way before the time ended while the other made up for it once they reached Banu Quraiẓah. Coming to know about the incident, the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not reprimand either group nor did he impart any specific instruction on this occasion. (Bukhari & Muslim) The above incident is enough to prove that difference of opinion is a quite natural phenomenon and it will always happen between people as it also affirms that this kind of disagreement is not condemnable at all.

Islam respects difference of opinion– what is abhorable in the sight of Islam is disputing out of hatred and animosity as the Qur’an says, **“and do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart.” (8:46)** In a time when the enemies are trying to harm and subjugate Islam and the Muslims by all means, we as an Ummah must not condemn people for having supported views or opinions that do not suit what we believe or because someone belongs to a certain school of thought. We may express our opinions if we differ but that should be done only to proclaim what we believe to be true as per our understanding. In all our words and deeds, we should

be focusing on strengthening the fabric of the Muslim society as a whole despite all the differences it has.

As a historical fact, almost 95% of the Ummah has always been unanimously following the four leading Islamic jurists namely Imam Abu Ḥaniifah, Imam Malik, Imam al-Shafi'i and Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal for more than a millennium maintaining that following the Imams is nothing but (a facilitated way of) following the Qur'an and Sunnah. Just as after 1400 years after the Prophetic era we take the Qur'an and Sunnah as the fundamental sources of Islamic law, the leading scholars followed by the majority also held them as such inferring rulings for unprecedented issues from them. They strived to spread and help people understand the purports of religious texts and rulings inferred from them and sacrificed their precious time, life and wealth to promote the noble cause of Islam. Thus there is no need to think over the issues already dealt with by the able early scholars in the light of the same fundamental religious sources held by the Ummah down the ages. The issue of offering Ṣalah for instance was sufficiently dealt with by the Imams. There was no aspect left untouched and as a matter of fact there should be no further questioning as to how Ṣalah should be offered. One should trust the Tabi'in and Tab' Tabi'in in their understanding and explanation of Islam for they leaned the Qur'an and Sunnah under the guidance and company of the Companions and their disciples. If one does not want to follow their opinions one may consult a living scholar and act as per his advice but daring to question or condemn any scholarly opinion of the Imams especially that of Imam Abu Ḥanifah-the famous Tabi'i and Faqih of 80th Hjiri- as going against the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah and in contrast vehemently supporting the opinion

of a scholar of the 21st century as the only vaid opinion conforming to the Qur'an and Sunnah is nothing but a wicked game to create discord among the Ummah of Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Some among the Ghayr Muqallidin create confusion in the mind of common people by presenting disputed issues as if a scholar of our time can never make a mistake while Abu Ḥanifah, an able scholar and the heir to the academic legacy of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (Rḍ) often made mistakes. They mention the scholarly opinions attributed to Imam Abu Ḥanifah and other scholars of the Ḥanafi school to falsely make people believe that truth only lies in whatever a scholar of the 21st century dictates whereas all the opinions expressed by Abu Ḥanifah and Ḥanafi scholars were a result of their misunderstanding hence false. In doing so, they question a man who got mastery on Islamic sciences and inherited the academic legacy of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (Rḍ) through his famous Shaykh Ḥammad who reported from Ibrahim al-Nakha'i who reported from 'Alqamah the disciple of 'Abdullah. Besides, Ḥammah was the closest and most able disciple of Anas ibn Malik (Rḍ) a prominent companion of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Imam Abu Ḥanifah accompanied Ḥammad as his most distinguished disciple for 18 years and finally when the Shaykh passed away he took his place and continued his circle. Some Ghayr Muqallidin cite scholarly opinions of Imam Abu Ḥanifah and other scholars of the group saying, 'This is what Abu Ḥanifah and the Ḥanafis say while the Qur'an and Sunnah dictate otherwise.' In doing so, they intentionally or unintentionally miss the point that whatever opinion was expressed by Imam Abu Ḥanifah or any Ḥanafi jurist other than him was a result of Ijtihad honestly performed by them in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah and not from any previous heavenly scripture or books held as such by

followers of other religions. They shone like stars in the academic circle in their time and strived to infer religious rulings by the religiously established method known as Ijtihah or independent reasoning. For example, Imam Abu Ḥanifah and the other Ḥanafi scholars maintain that mandate of giving Zakah should also apply to jewelry in use. The opinion besides being supported by evidences from the Qur'an and Sunnah is based on opting to the safe side. But there are people who blindly following opinion of their scholars shamelessly condemn this view of Ḥanafi scholars as going against the Qur'an and Sunnah while the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia Shaykh Ibn Baaz (Rḥ) also was of the same opinion. What's worse is that when it comes to Ibn Baaz these fellows ignore his opinion calling it a lone opinion of the Shaykh but when it comes of Abu Ḥanifah and the Ḥanafis they feel it necessary to clarify that 'it goes against the Qur'an and Sunnah'. Similarly, we hardly see them criticizing Shaykh Albani's view concerning *ḥijab* of the face but when it comes to Witr Ṣalah their enthusiasm knows no bound to convince people that offering three rak'ahs as Witr is wrong; one should pray only one instead. Surprisingly, the very Ḥadith they cite to support their respective opinion about 8 rak'ahs of Tarawiḥ clearly mentions Witr as three rak'ahs. This makes it clear that though they condemn Taqlid and those who do it yet they themselves blindly follow the opinions of their own scholars, no matter how weak arguments have might have. What's more embarrassing is that they or some of them feel no hesitation in passing defamatory remarks on the Imams in general and especially on Imam Abu Ḥanifah. The hardcore ones even shamelessly lie that Abu Ḥanifah lacked sufficient knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah. To them, a mediocre teaching Ḥadith in a far off corner of a non-Muslim country with a meager Muslim

population can be 'great scholar of Ḥadith and Fiqh' but they can easily question the calibre of Abu Ḥanifah, the man who had studied under the prominent disciples of the Companions of his time, the man who proved himself to be the rightful heir to the academic legacy of 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and who was the grand teacher of the teachers of acclaimed Muḥaddithin the likes of Imam al-Bukhari, Imam Muslim, Imam al-Tirmidhi, Imam al-Nasa'i and Imam Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal. It's nothing but hatred that blinds people.

Understanding Taqlid

If a person consults a religious scholar to enquire about religious ruling on a certain issue and the scholar instructs him as per the Shari'ah without mentioning the respective evidences for the ruling he told the person and then the enquirer acts as per his instruction as people commonly do, this is called Taqlid or following a scholar. People when consulting a scholar believe that whatever instruction the scholar will give will be in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah. This is how the case is as we all know that an enquirer does not ask for providing evidences. However, if the enquirer later comes to know the evidence/s on which the scholar relied in his answer to him through someone else or he himself finds it out by going through the Qur'an and Sunnah, this in no way will be contradictory to the concept of Taqlid. This is however, called general Taqlid which can be further divided into two kinds.

Taqlid Shakhṣi

Following all the *mufta bihi* opinions (the preferred stances of a Fiqhi school upon which Fatwa is issued) of a Fiqhi school attributed to a specific Imam without asking for

providing evidences for the same to act upon them. Such opinions may belong to the Imam to which the school is attributed as well as to his disciples or other scholars following the same methodology. These preferably adopted opinions altogether form a specific school of Fiqh such as the Ḥanafi school, the Maliki school and the like.

Taqlid Ghayr Shakhsi

Following opinions of a number of mujtahid scholars from different schools of Fiqh without asking for providing evidences for the verdicts issued by them is called Taqlid Ghayr Shakhsi i.e. choosing opinions from different scholars and avoiding to follow the *mufta bihi* opinions of a specific school.

As clear from the above definitions, Taqlid is all about relying on an expert in religious sciences and acting in accordance with his explanations by those who themselves are not qualified enough to infer ruling directly from the Qur'an and Sunnah as is the case with more than 95% of the Ummah. There is nothing wrong in doing so rather it is established by numerous evidences from the Qur'an and Sunnah. To avoid lengthening the discourse, we cite here only two verses from the Qur'an and one Ḥadith of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

Two Qur'anic verses establishing practice of TaqlId:
Allah the Exalted has said: **"O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you." (4:59)** The verse clearly enjoins obedience to the *uli al-amr* generally translated as 'those in authority'. The exegetes of Qur'anic sciences differ as to whom the phrase refers to. Some said it refers to the rulers while others stated it means mujtahid Imams. But a

little deeper pondering on the verse would be enough to realize that there is no actual contradiction between the two implications offered by the scholars as the phrase includes both in its general meaning. To explain it further, *amr* meaning matter is of two kinds: worldly and religious. Hence with regard to worldly affairs and on political ground the phrase enjoins showing obedience to the ruler of the area concerned while in terms of religious guidance it calls upon the believers to obey the Imams capable of exercising Independent Reasoning to infer rulings (for unprecedented cases) from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Obeying the authority is necessary to maintain law and order whereas following the able scholars is required for a person incapable of exercising Ijtihad to act upon the religion. Since all the four Imams largely followed by the majority were of high calibre, it would be perfectly in line with the Qur'anic injunction concerning obedience to the *uli al-amr* to follow them in religious matters. The verse clearly enjoins the Muslims to obey the mujtahid Imams along with obeying Allah and His Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Moreover, it has been reported from 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas (Rḍ), the famous Companion and expert of Qur'anic sciences that the phrase *uli al-amr* refers to the people of Fiqh and religious wisdom. (Al-Mustadrak by al-Ḥakim: Book of Knowledge, Chapter: Showing reverence to the scholars)

Similarly, in another verse Allah the Exalted has said: **"So ask the people of the message if you do not know." (16:43)** The word *dhikr* translated as message in the verse refers to knowledge. (Tafsir Ibn Kathir) The purport of the verse is instructing those lacking knowledge of the religion to consult those having thorough religious wisdom and act as advised. Ḥafiẓ Ibn 'Abd al-Barr (d. 463 AH) wrote: "The

scholars do not differ on the point that the masses must follow (make taqlid of) their scholars. They are the ones meant by the verse, 'Ask the people of the reminder if you know not' [Surat al-Naḥl 43]. They are in agreement that a blind person must emulate (taqlid) someone whom he considers trustworthy in order to ascertain the direction of the Prayer (qiblah), if it becomes difficult for him to do so by himself. Similarly, whoever does not possess knowledge of the meanings of what he has been ordered to submit with, then he is required to perform taqlid of a scholar." (Jami' Bayan al-'Ilm wa Faḍlihi, v 2, p 989)

To be brief, both the verses are clear in that the masses lacking proper knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah must consult their scholars and act as they advise them. One having common sense in the least degree will realize how reason and nature both approve this human trend. In our day-to-day affairs we often consult experts of different fields for various purposes instead of pretending fully independent: we go to a doctor's to get treatment under his guidance, we contact an engineer if we want to built a house for us, we consult a lawyer for seeking legal advice, we rely on the scientists in their research and discoveries, we trust the historians and reliable biographers in historical accounts, we depend on the experts of 'Ilm al-Rijal and the Muḥaddithin in ascertaining status of a narrator, we believe the exegetes of Qur'anic sciences in knowing the nasikh (abrogating) and mansukh (abrogated) verses of the Qur'an, we resort to the experts of the Tajwid discipline to be enlightened about the rulings followed in recitation of the Qur'an and we accept views of the Islamic biographers (ahl a-siyar) in matters related to the history and biography of the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم). Similarly, when it comes to religious rulings and legal Islamic stances, one must

follow a more knowledgeable scholar qualified enough to exercise Ijtihad and this is what they term as Taqlid.

Evidence of Taqliḍ from Ḥadith:

Ḥuẓayfah (rḍ) narrated: **"We were sitting with the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and he said: 'I do not know how long I will be with you, so stick to the two after me,' and he signaled towards Abu Bakr and ‘Umar."** (Sunan al-Trimidhi: Book of Virtues, Chapter: Virtues of ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ud) Apparently, the phrase ‘the two after me’ referred to the respective subsequent period of caliphate for each i.e. the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) asked the believers to obey Abu Bakr and ‘Umar respectively when they would take the office of the caliphate after him. As both could not be assigned the caliphate at the same time, the Ḥadith clearly implied that the Muslims should follow the two one after another during their respective reigns. Thus they were called upon to follow a certain individual for a specific period of time and as clear there is no mention of asking for providing evidences from the two before one should follow them. This is what establishes the first form of Taqlid namely Taqlid Shakhṣi. Moreover, the actual word appearing in the Ḥadith is iqtadu, a derivative of the gerund iqtida’ which is not used to denote following in management issues; the word basically means what we have explained before. The Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) sent many Companions to different areas to teach people and the people were required to act as per their advice. Mus’ab ibn ‘Umayr was sent to Madinah and ‘Ali and Mu’adh ibn Jabal were sent to Yemen and later during the caliphate of ‘Umar ‘Abdullah ibn Mas’ud was sent to Kufa where people followed them in whatever verdicts they issued. This is what they call as Taqlid.

The reality of Taqlid and the purpose behind it

Islam came to basically invite people to obey Allah the Exalted. The Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) through his words and actions elaborated the Devine injunctions explaining what is lawful and what is unlawful hence his obedience was also necessary (in order to follow Allah). Thus the Muslims were called upon to obey both Allah and the Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) in all the matters related to the Shari'ah. Each and every Muslim is obliged to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah and whoever follows anyone other than the Messenger assigning him independent office of Islamic legislation will cease to be a Muslim for it is the Messenger alone who is to be obeyed as the envoy of God. Every Muslim should follow only whatever is contained in the Qur'an and Sunnah but as a matter of fact it is not easy for a the laymen and even for the men of average religious knowledge to fully comprehend the Qur'an and Sunnah as they both have different kinds of rulings, some being explicit in nature and easy to understand for all and other too concise to be easily understood, complicated or having apparent contradiction with other rulings of the Qur'an and Sunnah; a fact that makes it extremely difficult for one to derive rulings from them.

As such, there can be two ways to deal with the issues: (1) striving to derive a ruling from such concise, complicated and seemingly contradictory texts relying on one's own limited knowledge and insufficient understanding and acting in accordance with the conclusion each and every individual reaches and (2) the other option is to rely on understanding of the knowledgeable pious predecessors

concerning such issues and find out how the able scholars of the early era dealt with such texts and what conclusions they put forth after life-long research and mental effort. There can be no two opinions that the first approach can be extremely dangerous for one's religious well-being while the second one provides a highly secure and safe way to act upon the religion. Moreover, no one can deny that the scholars of the yore were superior to us in terms of in-depth knowledge, deep understanding and remarkable piety. Besides, having lived in an era closer to that of the Prophet and the Companions and being direct disciples of the Companions or the Successors, it was comparatively easy for them to understand the religion. On the other hand, we live in an era when we are unable even to imagine the exact lifestyle they had or the manner in which they talked. In order to fully comprehend speech of an individual or a statement given in a specific time, one must take the whole background into account. Therefore, if we adopt opinions of a prominent scholar belonging to the early centuries concerning ambiguous or open-to-interpretation issues instead of opting to self-interpreting, it will be called as Taqlid of that particular scholar in the issues concerned. It is also clear here that Taqlid of an Imam is only done in unspecified or seemingly contradictory issues. As for explicitly defined rulings, there is no need to follow any Mujtahid at all. It should also be kept in mind that Taqlid is nothing but an honest attempt to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah while relying on a scholar in his interpretation. Now it's upto you to decide if this approach has any aspect of Shirk or sin. If a person regards any scholar an independent authority to legislate and considers it obligatory to follow him in this sense, it would be blatant Shirk. Trusting a scholar as a reliable interpreter of the Shari'ah instead of relying on one's own

puny intellect and insufficient knowledge is something we cannot do away with. In short, it is an honest desire to preserve the real purports of the Shari'ah and act upon the religious teachings in a facilitated manner is what we seek after by opting to follow the Mujtahids and the Imams.

Why is it necessary to perform Ijtihad or do Taqlid?

The issues that are of peripheral nature (furu'i) in Islam are of two kinds: issues established by definite and non-contradictory texts of the Qur'an and authentic Ḥadiths of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) called as *manṣuṣah ghayr muta'ariḍah* or non-contradictory specified. In issues as such there is no need to exercise Ijtihad at all nor does any Mujtahd ever do so because it's a prerequisite for performing independent reasoning that the issue concerned should not be a specified one hence there arises no question of Taqlid in such explicitly defined matters– one should follow the rulings as stipulated in the religious texts instead. On the other hand, there is another set of issues not expressedly defined by the Qur'anic or Prophetic texts or there are verses and Ḥadiths that contain rulings for such issues but not in explicit manner such as texts that are open to interpretation or seemingly contradict with other available texts. When it comes to such unspecified issues known as *masa'il ijtihadiyyah ghayr manṣuṣah,* Ijtihad is performed by a Mujtahid to find out the Shari'ah ruling/s concerning the issue/s. These are the very issues in which a common believer is required to follow a Mujtahid. Since all the issues that the Ummah face or might come along have not been expressedly dealt with by the Shari'ah and at the same time it is not possible for each and every Muslim to exercise Ijtihad, Allah the Exalted endowed

certain individuals of the Ummah with the ability to perform Ijtihad and infer rulings for issues not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah so as to make it easy for the common believers to act upon the Shari'ah. The Companions who could easily approach the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) did not need to perform Ijtihad as the Prophet himself (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was there to help and guide them. But the Companions who lived outside Madinah and similarly the succeeding generation of Islam needed it the most for they had no choice but to exercise Ijtihad to find out Shari'ah rulings about unprecedented issues. Therefore, we see that a number of Companions, the Successors and their disciples frequently performed Ijtihad whenever needed. Besides, we know how the Messenger of Allah approved and encouraged Mu'adh ibn Jabal (Rḍ) in clear terms when he talked of performing Ijtihad while leaving for Yemen as governor of the area. The narration as reported by some companions of Mu'adh is as follows:

When the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) intended to send Mu'adh ibn Jabal to Yemen, he asked: How will you judge when the occasion of deciding a case arises? He replied: I shall judge in accordance with Allah's Book. He asked: (What will you do) if you do not find any guidance in Allah's Book? He replied: (I shall act) in accordance with the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم). He asked: (What will you do) if you do not find any guidance in the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and in Allah's Book? He replied: I shall do my best to form an opinion and I shall spare no effort. The Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) then patted him on the breast and said: Praise be to Allah Who has helped the messenger of the Messenger of Allah to find

something which pleases the Messenger of Allah. (Abu Dawud, al-Tirmidhi & al-Darimi)

The narration serves best as evidence for the permissibility of Ijtihad and Taqlid both for it tells us that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) sent one of his prominent Companions to Yemen to serve as mentor, judge and governor of the region allowing him not only to judge in accordance with the Qur'an and Sunnah but to perform Ijtihad for issuing verdict while on the other hand the people of the region were required to obey him. This clearly establishes that the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) not only allowed Taqlid Shakhsi for people of Yemen but made it obligatory for them.

Taqlid during the time of the Companions and the Successors

The highly acclaimed Indian scholar Shah Wali Allah of Delhi (1703-1762 CE) had lengthily and comprehensively dealt with the issue of Taqlid. Since the Ghayr Muqallidin deliberately misquote or misinterpret his statements regarding Taqlid to condemn the practice, we find it befitting to quote from him what and how he presented the issue in his numerous writings. It should be kept in mind that Shah Wali Allah is not only held in high regard equally by the Muslims of the subcontinent belonging to different schools of thought but was a worldwide celebrated scholar with his writings receiving globally great appreciation, *Hujjat Allah al-Balighah* being an all time masterpiece in the Islamic literature. All the different Islamic schools of thought in the subcontinent proudly claim to be the true heirs to his academic legacy thus using it to prove authenticity of their respective ideologies. To top it all, it is Shah Wali Allah though him all the chains of Ḥadith of the

later Islamic scholars usually reach upto the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

It was a common practice during the time of the Companions and the Successors, as Shah Wali Allah puts it, that if a person faced an issue and was unable to find out the ruling about it he would consult a reliable scholar and act as per his advice. Before the immergence of the four legal schools it was common among them to follow any Mujtahid around them and no one from among them ever condemned it. Had it (following a scholar/Taqlid) been wrong they would have certainly rejected the practice. (‘Iqd al-Jid, p 22) Elsewhere he makes it clear that in order to follow a Mujtahid it is not necessary for the Muqallid to regard the Imam he follows superior to all the other scholars as he says: …. According to scholarly consensus, it is not necessary for Taqlid to be valid that one should believe that the Imam he is following has superiority over rest of the scholars because the noble Companions and the Successors despite having believed in the superiority of Abu Bakr and ‘Umar over the rest of the Ummah left some of their opinions to adopt views of other Companions and no one condemned it and this establishes it as a consensual issue. (‘Iqd al-Jid, p 76)

Since the Companions and the Successors lived in an era that was relatively closer to the time of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), it was a blessed period of time full of honesty and piety and then again there were lesser chances of any harm in practicing Taqlid Ghayr Shakhṣi. Moreover, it was the time when Fiqh as a separate discipline was not yet codified. But as time passed by changes took place in people’s behavior and therefore it became necessary to constrict the scope of Taqlid and urge people to adhere to a

particular scholar instead of general Taqlid as they had been accustomed to so far so as to shun the door of Fitnah and prevent people from taking religion lightly. By the end of the second Islamic century, the Ummah was able to find legal opinions of the leading scholars systematically arranged in forms of books and thus Taqlid Shakhṣi started to flourish as a general trend in the Ummah though many a people being unable to find any set of codified Fiqh continued to practice Taqlid Ghay Shakhṣi until they found one. To quote Shah Wali Allah once again: It was during the second century of Islam that following a particular Mujtahid became common and there was scarcely anyone who did not do so. This was the obligation at that time." (Al-Inṣaf, p 6) Talking about the process of codification of Fiqh, he comments as follows: "In short, emergence of these Mujtahids with their respective schools and people's adherence to them is something extremely subtle that Allah has inspired in their hearts and united them upon it, regardless of whether they understand it or not." (Al-Inṣaf, p 67) Though, as a historical fact, adherence to a particular school of jurisprudence or Taqlid Shakhṣi became a trend in the second century yet there were people who still preferred to practice Taqlid Ghayr Shakhṣi. Shah Wali Allah writes: It should be known that until the fourth century people did not follow a particular school of jurisprudence (Taqlid Shakhṣi). (Hujjat Allah al-Balighah, v 1, p 112)

Following the four Imams

With codification and spread of the legal stances (Fqh) of the four Imams, Abu Ḥanifah, Malik, al-Shafi'i and Aḥmad (may Allah have mercy on them) far and wide in the Islamic territories, people adhered to any of these four schools at large and anyone hardly disagreed with the prevalent trend. On the other hand, a person opposing the practice

of Taqlid was regarded as to going against al-Sawad al-’Aẓam or the mainstream which is undoubtedly a major sin in Islam. Shah Wali Allah puts it thus: When all the true legal schools except the four disappeared, following them became identical to following al-Sawad al-’Aẓam and leaving them was considered denouncing al-Sawad al-’Aẓam. (‘iqd al-Jid, p 38) He further explains that the strongest evidence that substantiates permissibility of adhering only to any of these four schools is consensus of the Ummah on it. He says: The whole Ummah or say the noteworthy among them have been unanimous about permissibility of following the famous four schools till today. (Hujjat Allah al-Balighah, v 1, p 23) He continues: In this are interests that are not hidden, especially in these days in which aspirations are very shunted and souls are given to desire and every holder of an opinion is impressed by his own opinion. (Ibid) Then again he goes on criticizing those who condemn the practice of Taqlid Shakhṣi: As for ‘Allamah Ibn Ḥazm’s opinion that ‘Taqlid is forbidden and it is not allowed to take anyone’s opinion except what comes from the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)’, it is a baseless statement. (Ibid) He was also of the opinion that a person living in a land where no scholars or books of other legal schools are available must adhere to the prevalent school in the area and that is better for him. To quotes his words: “So when an ignorant person is in the lands of India or the lands of Transoxiana, and there is no Shafi’i, Maliki or Ḥanbali scholar there, and no book from the books of those maẓhabs, it is necessary for him to do taqlid of the maẓhab of Abu Ḥanifah, and it is forbidden for him to leave his maẓhab, because by doing so he will release [himself from] the noose of the Shari’ah and will remain aimless and without purpose. (Al-Inṣaf) Condemning those who disassociate themselves from the Muḥaddithin and

Fuqaha', he writes in his *Al-Inṣaf*: Whoever delink himself from the noble ṣufis endowed with knowledge of the Shari'ah and the scholars who were also ṣufis or the Muḥaddithin who acquired a great portion of Ḥadiths of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) or the Fuqaha' who mastered the disciple of Fiqh, does not belong to our group.

Furthermore, in his *Muqaddimah* (*Preface*) 'Allamah Ibn Khuldun (13332-1404 CE) writes:
"Taqlid in all towns came to rest on these four, and followers of other than them disappeared. The people shut the door of disagreement and all the paths leading to it. When the diversification of the technical terms of the sciences became extensive and it became difficult to reach the level of Ijtihad; it was feared that [somebody] unqualified for it whose opinion and religion are not trusted would be ascribed to it; so the cautious scholars of time confessed their inability to perform Ijtihad and directed people to keep following the Imams they had been doing taqlid of. Since frequent alteration of taqlid i.e. following an Imam in one issue and then following another in a different case would imply frivolity, they forbade people to practice this kind of taqlid emphasizing on strict adherence to a particular Imam. Consequently, all that remained after authentication of the basic texts and connecting their chains by narration was transmission of their (respective) maẓhabs, each muqallid acting on the maẓhab of the one he did taqlid of from among them. Therefore, Fiqh means nothing beyond that nowadays. Any claim of ijtihad in this age is rejected and turned on its heel, and taqlid of such a person is abandoned. The people of Islam have evolved into taqlid of these four Imams." (Taken from Awshiḥat al-Jid, p. 809)

Confinement within the four schools of Fiqh is a Divine blessing

There is no escape from following a Mujtahid in the interpretative issues unspecified in the Shariah known as *masa'il ijtihadiyyah ghayr-manṣuṣah*. Since all the legal schools including the valid ones except the prevalent four disappeared by the fourth century and there were slim chances that anyone from the existing generation onward would reach the level of Ijtihad, people were left with two options: (1) either to be content with whatever opinions they form as per their understanding and act in accordance with them or (2) follow the four acclaimed Imams instead of following their whims and desires. Allah the Exalted showed His immense mercy to the Ummah by putting love of the four Imams in their hearts and inspired them to opt for Taqlid. In the words of Shah Wali Allah as quoted before from his *Al-Inṣaf*, 'adherence to the maẓhabs of the Mujtahid Imams is something extremely subtle that Allah has inspired in the hearts of the scholars and united them upon it, regardless of whether they understand it or not.' Elsewhere he wrote: The fourth sign of Mujtahidin is their heavenly acceptance resultant in attracting the scholars, the exegetes of the Qur'an (Mufassirin), the scholars of Ḥadith (Muḥaddithin), the experts in Islamic principles (Uṣuliyyin) and the leading authorities in Ḥadith and Fiqh (Ḥujjaẓ) towards their knowledge and then it continues for ages until their acceptance finds its way to the depth of (people's) hearts. Alḥamdulillah, this sign is obviously found in the case of the Four Imams indicating their acceptance with Allah.

Obligation of following a particular Imam

In view of the of period of time we live in when people in general lack in righteousness and sound religious understanding and are prone to their selfish whims and desires, Taqlid Shakhṣi becomes an obligation for all which no sensible person could deny. It would be helpful to explain the term 'wujub', before understanding why Taqlid is necessary (wajib) in the present situation. A thing becomes a religious obligation (wajib) when either of the following two reasons is found: It has been expressedly commanded to observe such as Ṣalah, Ṣawm etc. When a thing is enjoined in this manner, it is called *wujub bi al-dhat* or obligation on its own. As for the second reason, if it becomes impossible to carry out the religious obligations without a thing not expressedly enjoined in the Qur'an and Sunnah, the later also turns into a religious obligation as per the famous principle "Whatever leads to a Wajib is itself a Wajib". For instance, nowhere in the Qur'an and Sunnah it is mentioned that people should codify the Qur'an and the Ḥadith but since preserving them is a highly emphasized religious obligation and since writing down was the only general way of preserving them, it was deemed necessary to codify and write down the Qur'an and Sunnah and the Ummah has been unanimous about it. In short, when a thing becomes obligatory for an external reason, it is called *wujub bi al-ghayr*.

Taqlid and the Muḥaddithin

Taqlid existed from the beginning. In the early eras people followed whoever scholar they relied on and then the scholars instructed people to adhere to the maẓhab of a particular Imam for the reasons lengthily discussed so far.

After that with the disappearance of the different Fiqhi schools followed in the early centuries except the four, the majority of the Muslims including the circle of the Muḥaddithin unanimously agreed to follow them as you shall see in the following lines that every Muḥaddith followed any of the four Imams in their legal opinions. A list of such prominent Muḥaddithin is given below:

Imam al-Bukhari

Muḥammad ibn Isma'il al-Bukhari (d. 256 AH), the acclaimed Muḥaddith and compiler of the most authentic collection of Ḥadith known as *Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhari* was a follower of the Shafi'i school. He studied Fiqh of al-Shafi'i under his famous teacher al-Ḥumaydi. This is a historically proved fact attested by a number of reliable scholars. Shah Wali Allah of Delhi has also stated in his Al-Inṣaf: Al-Imam al-Bukhari followed the Shafi'i school in a good many number of issues though he disagreed with al-Shafi'i in some issues and followed his own judgments as a qualified mujtahid.

Imam Muslim

An acclaimed authority in the science of Ḥadith and the author of *Ṣaḥiḥ Muslim*, al-Imam Abu al-Ḥusayn al-Qushayri (d. 261 AH) was a follower of the Shafi'i school as stated by a number of reliable scholars including the author of *Kashf al-Ẓunun* and Shah Wali Allah of Delhi in his *Al-Inṣaf*.

Imam Abu Dawu

Sulayman ibn Ash'ath al-Sajistani (d. 275), the author of *Sunan Abi Dawud* was a follower of the Ḥanbali school as stated by Ibn Khallikan in his history and Shah Wali Allah in his *Al-Inṣaf*. Moreover, Shah Abd al-'Aziz the Muḥaddith of Delhi writes in his *Bistan al-Muḥaddithin*: The scholars

differ about the Fiqhi school Abu Dawud followed; some say he was a Shafi'i and others assert that he followed the Ḥanbali school and Allah knows the best.

Imam al-Tirmidhi

In his *Al-Inṣaf*, Shah Wali Allah of Delhi writes about Abu 'Isa ibn Sawrah al-Tirmidhi (d. 269), the author of *Jami' al-Tirmidhi* as follows: He was a follower of the Ḥanafi school and also adhered to the school of Imam Isḥaq ibn Rahawayh. However, some scholars state that he was a follower of the Shafi'i school.

Ibn Majah and al-Darimi

Imam Ibn Majah (d. 253) and Imam al-Darimi (d. 255) both were followers of the Ḥanbali school. It is also called that they adhered to the school of Imam Isḥaq ibn Rahawayh as mentioned by Shah Wali Allah in his *Al-Inṣaf*.

Imam al-Nasa'i: 'Abd al-Raḥman Aḥmad al-Nasa'i (d. 303), the author of *Sunan al-Nasa'i* adhered to the Shafi'i school as manifest from his book *Al-Manasik*. Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz writes in his *Bistan al-Muḥaddithin* as well as in *Jami' al-Uṣul*: Al-Nasa'i was a follower of the Shafi'i school; he has compiled a book on the rituals of pilgrimage (manasik) (explaining things) according to the legal opinions (maẕhab) of Imam al-Shafi'i. Besides, Shah 'Abd al-Ḥaqq, the Muḥaddith of Delhi also mentioned the same in his *Sharḥ Sifr al-Sa'adah*.

Al-Layth ibn Sa'd

Imam Layth (d. 174), one of the teachers of Imam al-Bukhari and a direct disciple of the Successors, was a follower of the Ḥanafi school as 'Allamah al-Qasṭallani reported from Ibn Khallikan. The author of *Al-Jawahir al-Muḍi'ah* in the book and 'Allamah 'Ayni in his *Sharḥ 'Umdat al-Qari* wrote: Al-Layth was a great Imam who unarguably

enjoyed prominence, trustworthiness and nobility and was a follower of the school of law attributed to Imam Abu Ḥanifah as al-Qaḍi Khallikan said it and there is no one called Layth ibn Sa'd appearing in all the six Ḥadith compilations except him, quote ended.

Imam Abu Yusuf

Ya'qub ibn Ibrahim al-Ansari (d. 183 AH) the famous disciple of Imam Abu Ḥanifah was a follower of the Ḥanafi school. Ibn Khallikan writes that he followed Abu Ḥanifah in most of the issues though he had his own opinions concerning certain issues i.e. he disagreed (with the opinions of Abu Ḥanifah) in issues he formed his own opinions about by exercising Ijtihad for which he was enough qualified.

Imam Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-Shaybani

Imam Muḥammad (d. 187) the famous disciple of Imam Abu Ḥanifah and Imam Abu Yusuf also adhered to the Ḥanafi school. He followed Abu Ḥanifah in most of the issues though he had his own opinions concerning certain issues i.e. he disagreed (with the opinions of Abu Ḥanifah) in issues he was enough qualified to form his own opinions about them by exercising Ijtihad. The author of *Kashf al-Ẓunun* and Ibn Khallikan both have clearly mentioned that he was a follower of the Ḥanafi school.

Similarly, if we go through the biographies the prominent Muḥaddithin who lived after the fourth Islamic century, we will hardly find anyone who did not follow any of the prevalent schools of Fiqh. Ḥafiẓ al-Zayla'i, 'Allamah 'Ayni, al-Muḥaqqiq Ibn Humam, Mulla 'Ali al-Qari among other experts of the disciplines of Ḥadith and Fiqh followed the Ḥanafi school. The great scholar of Ḥadith 'Allamah Ibn 'Abd al-Barr was a follower of the Maliki school of Fiqh while a number of leading authorities in Ḥadith the likes of

Al-Nawawi, al-Baghawi, al-Khaṭṭabi, al-Dhahabi, al-’Asqalani, al-Qasṭallani and al-Suyuṭi followed the Shafi’i school. Besides, a great number of Muḥaddithin including ‘Allamah Ibn Taymiyyah and Ḥafiẓ Ibn al-Qayyim adhered to the Fiqhi school of Imam Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal.

Taqlid of Imam Abu Ḥanifah and the spread of his school of Fiqh

Following demise of the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم), the Companions diverged into different towns and villages and many of them settled in different areas. In line with the Prophetic statement, ‘My Companions are like the stars; whoever among them you use for guidance, you will be rightly guided’, they were consulted and followed in religious matters whenever they lived. Then there emerged an able generation by the virtue of the religious wisdom imparted by the Companions who were as known Tabi’in or the Successors whom people followed. Around this time, Imam Abu Ḥanifah (Nu’man ibn Thabit) was born in Kufa in the year 80 AH while Imam Malik was born in Madinah in the year 95 AH. The people of Iraq followed Abu Ḥanifah as their Imam while Imam Malik guided the people of Hejaz as their leading scholar. Then in the year 150 AH, the word witnessed the birth of another great Imam namely al-Shafi’i in Gaza (Palestine) and when he reached the level of Ijtihad a great number of people followed his legal opinions. Then there came Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal born in 194 AH,another leading authority in Ḥadith and a great Mujtahid and many people followed him in his legal stances. History, however, tells us that many scholars appeared on the scene after the four great Imams who also had their followers but gradually they decreased

in number and with time there was a complete disappearance of all the other schools except the four existing till today. It was a pure Divine intervention that the followers of the four schools constantly increased with time and their respective legal opinions were documented in forms of books. Especially, the able disciples of Imam Abu Ḥanifah, Imam Abu Yusuf, Imam Muḥammad and Imam Ẓufar wrote a number of books on Ḥadith and Fiqh in which they mentioned all the relevant opinions of the Imam with sufficient detail. Besides, the great Imam himself penned down a few books. ‘Allamah al-Kawthari writes in his note on *Bulugh al-Ma’ani* (p. 18) that the accounts of the early scholars attribute the following books to Imam Abu Ḥanifah: *Kitab al-Ra’i* as stated by Ibn al-Awwam, *Kitab Ikhtilaf al-Ṣaḥabah* as stated by Abu ‘Aṣim al-’Amiri Mas’ud ibn Shaybah, *Kitab al-Siyar, Kitab al-Awsaṭ* and *Kitab al-Jami’* as mentioned by al-’Abbas ibn Muṣ’ab in his *History of Marv*, *Al-Fiqh al-Akbar, Al-Fiqh al-Absaṭ, Kitab al-’Alim wa al-Muta’allim, Kitab al-Radd ‘ala al-Qadariyyah, Risalat Imam Abi Uthman al-Batti fi al-Irja’* and a few letters he wrote to his friends as advice and these all are famous. (See: preface of Anwar al-Bari)

The similitude of Islam is that of a flourishing blessed giant tree growing branches of different size: some grew a little and stopped while some grew so much that they covered the whole world. One such branch grew so high and wide that no part of the world was left untouched by its blessed shade. This blessed branch was the Ḥanafi school of Fiqh which spread to the Wall of Dhu al-Qarnayn in the mountain Qaf as early as in the third Islamic century. It is said that when the Abbasside caliph Wathiq bi-Allah sent a delegation to enquire about the Wall of Dhu al-Qarnayn, they found the people of the area following the Ḥanafi

school of jurisprudence. As a historical fact, for about a thousand years, more than 75% of the Ummah have been doing taqlid of Imam Abu Ḥanifah i.e. they have been following the legal opinions of Imam Abu Ḥanifah and the leading scholars of the school expressed by them in full honesty and in line with the Qur'an and Sunnah.

The beginning of anti-taqlid trend in the subcontinent

Since ever the arrival of Islam in the subcontinent, the majority of the Muslims unanimously followed the Ḥanafi school of Fiqh. But after the fall of the Muslim empire in India and the rise of the British rule when the Muslims lost religious supervision of the authority, voices were heard from here and there in the 13th Islamic century denouncing taqlid of the four Imams as a baseless practice in the Muslim society. Influenced by opinions of Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn al-Qayyim, Qaḍi al-Shawkani and the Zahirites in general, they started to show their disagreement with the Ḥanafis in each and every matter, openly calling them People of Bid'ah, Mushriks and even Kafirs.

Objections raised by the Ghayr Muqallidin concerning Taqlid of the Imams

Before delving into the objections and doubts created by the Ghayr Muqallidin about Taqlid, it would be helpful to bear in mind the following as a general principle.

Taqlid basically can be divided into two kinds: allowed and forbidden. This first kind i.e. allowed is what one does concerning the interpretative unspecified issues that require deductive analogy or independent reasoning to

derive their rulings by a scholar recognized by the people in terms of knowledge, piety and ability to perform Ijtihad. People follow such leading scholars for their utmost trust in their academic calibre and righteousness. This is the kind of taqlid which is not only desirable bur required (for the reasons mentioned before). The practice is approved by the Qur'an, Sunnah, practical example and statements of the great scholars of different Islamic sciences. The second kind of taqlid i.e. forbidden is when one follows someone in issues specified in the religious texts hence there can be no Ijtihad concerning them or following someone who lacks the required qualifications to exercise Ijtihad either because he is not a Muslim or is a Muslim but not enough qualified to do Ijtihad. This type of taqlid is a grave sin and forbidden in the Shari'ah.

Keeping the above clear in mind, go through all the objections raised by the Ghayr Muqallidin on the issue of Taqlid and you will find them all baseless– mere fallacies to deceive people and create confusion in their minds. They declare the 'permissible kind of Taqlid' the followers of the Imams do a forbidden practice but when it comes to support their claim they keep on citing evidences that actually refer to the 'forbidden kind of Taqlid. Though they present a series of arguments to substantiate their assertion but in fact they all boil down into a few in essence. Some of the objections often raised by them are mentioned below with detailed refutation:

First Objection

In their zeal to criticize Taqlid, they quote the following verse of the Qur'an which, according to their understanding, condemns the practice:

And when it is said to them, "Follow what Allah has revealed," they say, "Rather, we will follow that which we found our fathers doing." Even though their fathers understood nothing, nor were they guided? (2:170)

Refutation: As one can clearly see the deception of the argument for, as clear from the above discussion, those who are followed can be divided into two groups: the disbelievers and the Mujtahid Imams. Following the disbelievers is forbidden and that's what Allah the Almighty has condemned in the verse. As for following the leading scholars which has been a trend in the Muslim community throughout the ages, there is not a single verse in the Qur'an and a Ḥadith in the entire collection of the Prophetic tradition which condemns it. Besides, following the Imams is nothing but following the Qur'an and Sunnah (by relying on the understanding of the reliable scholars). On the other hand, two reasons cane be derived from the verse that make following the forefathers an evil practice: (1) giving a flat denial to the commandments of Allah and stubbornly clinging to the path of their forefathers instead and (2) that their forefathers were deprived of reason and guidance. Neither reason is found in taqlid of the Imams; no Muqallid neglects the commandments of Allah and His Messenger. The most one does is that one relies on the understanding of the Imams considering them reliable interpreters of the Qur'an and Sunnah. As for the second reason, even the hardcore opponents of Taqlid no matter how much they disagree with the opinions of the Imams followed by the masses can deny the prominence and academic calibre they enjoyed. Therefore, it would be sheer prejudice to compare Taqlid of the Imams to blind following of forefathers by the misguided people.

Second objection

To denounce Taqlid, they also quote the following verse from Surat al-Tawbah:

They have taken their scholars and monks as lords besides Allah, and [also] the Messiah, the son of Mary. And they were not commanded except to worship one God; there is no deity except Him. Exalted is He above whatever they associate with Him. (9:31)

Refutation: The rabbis and the monks among the Christians and the Jews would enjoin people to do or not to do things on their own against the Devine commandments they were called upon to follow. They would enjoin or forbid people whatever they willed and the masses followed assigning absolute authority to them in religion. Thus they committed Shirk. On the contrary, the Mujtahidin of the Ummah never ordained laws of their own nor did they regard themselves to have the authority to do so. They only strived to find out rulings (for unprecedented issues) in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah and explained to people what is lawful for them and what is not. Thus the approved form of following the Imams (Taqlid) and the blind following of the disbelievers stand poles apart and the verse in no way can be applied to the former kind of Taqlid.

Third objection

They also bring forth as an argument what Imam Malik reported in his Muwaṭṭa that that he heard that the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said: **"I have left two matters with you. As long as you hold to them, you will not go the wrong way. They are the Book of Allah and the Sunna of His Prophet."** The point of their argument is that

the Ḥadith enjoins to follow only the Qur'an and Sunnah so as to be protected against misguidance which ,as they argue, implies impermissibility of following any Imam in the interpretative issues (masa'il ijtihadiyyah).

Refutation: The Mujtahid scholars of the Ummah infer rulings in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah and they certainly do not resort to any previous heavenly scriptures or those of the pagan nations. Therefore, accepting legal opinions of the Imams is but to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Fourth Objection

It was reported on the authority of Jabir that 'Umar ibn al-Khattab brought a copy of the Torah to the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and said, "This is a copy of the Torah which I read." The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was silent but the color of his face changed." The Ḥadith contains the following statement of the Prophet in the end: **"By Allah, if Moses were to come here and were you to follow him and abandon me, you would have deviated from the straight path. If Moses were alive and had he seen me he would have followed Me."** (Sunan al-Darimi) The Ḥadith, they argue, clearly forbids even to follow the path of Musa (AS) leaving the way of the Messenger of Allah (صلى الله عليه وسلم), then how can one be allowed to follow any Imam or Mujtahid scholar?

Refutation: Prophet Musa was sent with a complete Shari'ah (law) and the Shari'ah brought by our beloved Messenger (صلى الله عليه وسلم) came to replace and abrogate it. Hence it would imply following the abrogated law should one followed Musa (AS) which eventually would mean denial of the Shari'ah revealed through Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم). On

the contrary, Taqlid of the Imams is done with the sole purpose of following the Qur'an and Sunnah, for all the Imams being righteous adherents of Islam followed the Divine injunctions as contained in the Qur'an and Sunnah and for the same purpose they strived to infer rulings by exercising Ijtihad when needed.

Fifth objection

Taqlid did not exist during the time of the Companions and the Successors hence it is a later innovation (Bid'ah). Also, the Companions enjoy superiority over the rest of the Ummah including the Four Imams hence were it allowed to do Taqlid people would have certainly followed the Companions.

Refutation: As discussed before, Taqlid did exist among the Companions and the Successors in the blessed early periods of Islam and therefore any such claim would simply amount to denial of a historically established fact. As for their argument about following a relatively inferior individual (in terms of religious merits) instead of a superior one, we have already put forth the following statement of Shah Wali Allah somewhere in the previous pages: …. According to scholarly consensus, it is not necessary for Taqlid to be valid that one should believe that the Imam he is following has superiority over rest of the scholars because the noble Companions and the Successors despite having believed in the superiority of Abu Bakr and 'Umar over the rest of the Ummah left some of their opinions to adopt views of other Companions and no one condemned and this establishes it as a consensual issue. ('Iqd al-Jid, p 72) Secondly, the reason for following the Imams instead of the Companions is not because the later lacked religious and academic excellence– they indeed

have superiority over the rest of the Ummah– but because their respective opinions concerning interpretative (ijtihadi) issues were not available in a codified manner as was the case with the legal opinions of the Four Imams– easily available in an organized manner to act upon. The famous books of the Ḥadith we have today were not compiled by the noble Companions but the noble task was done by a group of great scholars of the science who came after the Four Imams and received immense appreciation and acceptance by the Ummah. Similarly, the Ummah acknowledged and relied on the insight and understanding of the Four Imams in interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Sixth objection

The Imams themselves asked people not to follow them hence following them cannot be justified according to their own statements. Similarly, other Fuqaha', they argue, also prohibited people from doing Taqlid. However, the objection can be refuted in two ways:

Refutation (1) It is wrong to say that the Mujtahidin forbade people to follow their opinions because the fatwas they issued hardly had mention of the evidences they relied on in inferring the rulings. This makes it clear that they practically allowed Taqlid. Moreover, practicable example of other scholars of Fiqh also affirms the practice. It is not rocket science to understand that when a Mujtahid answers to the query of a person, it means he has told the enquirer what he understood from the Qur'an and Sunnah and asks him to do in accordance with the verdict issued.

Refutation (2) All the statements reported from the Mujtahidin about prohibition of Taqlid actually are directed

to those among the scholars who are qualified enough to exercise Ijtihad and not to the laymen or the mediocre lacking in the qualifications required. Imam Al-Sha'rani says: Taqlid is prohibited for a person fully capable of performing Ijtihad. Otherwise, the scholars clearly stated that a person lacking the qualifications of Ijtihad must do Taqlid so that he may not go astray (in matters of) his religion. The noble Fuqaha' prohibited only the condemned and disapproved form of Taqlid and not the desirable and approved one. (Al-Mizan al-Kubra,v 1, p 8) The author of *Al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir* made a similar statement as he wrote: Taqlid is prohibited for a mujtahid; as for a non-mujtahid, it is obligatory for him to do Taqlid of an Imam otherwise he will be doomed and go astray. (Al-Yawaqit, v 2, p 69)

Seventh objection

In order to demean the importance of Taqlid, they argue that the Qur'an and Sunnah have been made easy for people to understand hence there is no need to rely on anyone to understand the rulings contained in them, often quoting the verse **'And We have certainly made the Qur'an easy for remembrance, so is there any who will remember?' (54:22)** to support their claim.

Refutation: A little pondering on the verse would reveal that the Qur'an is made easy for people in terms of seeking guidance and taking advice. The phrase *li al-dhikr* translated as 'for remembrance' itself says it all. As for the verses that deal with rulings, they are very subtle and it is not easy to fully comprehend them for all. It is reported from the noble Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that he said: **The Qur'an has been revealed in seven forms. Each verse has an outer and an inner meaning and for each limit there is**

a (different) point of ascent. (Ṣaḥiḥ Ibn Ḥibban & Al-Ṭabarani) One cannot get mastery in Islamic sciences by merely going through a translation of the Qur'an hence one should not dare criticize the Fuqaha' the Muḥaddithin, the Mufassirin and the reliable scholars in general for their respective scholarly opinions relying on one's own limited knowledge and understanding. Sadly, that is the case with some self-proclaimed 'scholars' nowadays.

Eighth objection

The anti-Taqlid group falsely keeps blaming the Muqallidin that they prefer opinion of their Imam even if it goes against Ḥadith of the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) while Abu Ḥanifah himself asked people to leave his opinion if they find it contradicting with any Ḥadith.

Refutation: Regardless any opinion is reported from any Imam about a particular case or not, neglecting a Prophetic statement concerning the issue can never be expected from a person believing in Allah and His Messenger. I just wonder how one can imagine that a Muslim can ever think of giving preference to an opinion coming from any x and y over a statement reported from the infallible Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) when we all, as Muslims, are called upon to obey the Messenger and refuse anything that goes against his injunctions. This is a blatant lie and a great slander they utter against the Muqallidin out of prejudice. As for the statement of Abu Ḥafifah, it only shows the level of piety and selflessness the Imam enjoyed. It was the deep sense of academic honesty and vigilance that made him make such a statement that despite taking utmost care in the process of Ijtihad if he ever fails and forms an opinion that contradicts any Ḥadith

people should disregard his opinion and act according to the Ḥadith instead. But it does not mean that whatever a scholar of the present time understood from the Qur'an and Sunnah is bound to be true and whatever Abu Ḥanifah understood was a result of his misunderstanding in all the issues disputed over between the Ḥanafis and the Ghayr Muqallidin. There is not a single disputed issue between the two about which the Ghayr Muqallidin ever accepted their mistake considering Abu Ḥanifah right in his opinion. They often quote the above statement of the Imam only to prove him wrong posing as if truth only revolves around them. This is sheer arrogance. In other words, a scholar of the anti-Taqlid group is so confident about his understanding of the Qur'an and Ḥadith that he feels no need to make such a statement but at the same time he goes on citing the statement of a renowned Faqih and Muḥaddith of the 80th AH with the evil intention of condemning his scholarly opinions and inciting people against him. Isn't such provocative approach identical with creating Fitnah among the Muslim community, a grave sin regarded worse than killing by the Qur'an?

Elimination of a doubt

Some Ghayr Muqallidin abhor Fiqh calling it a manmade set of laws against the Qur'an and Sunnah. They even criticize the Imams and often make defamatory remarks about them. This is sheer ignorance. The Mujtahidin themselves followed the Qur'an and Sunnah and used the method of Ijtihad to derive rulings for unprecedented cases from the very fundamental religious sources. For example, as stipulated in a number of Ḥadiths, it will entail Kaffarah (expiation) if a person deliberately copulates with his wife while fasting during the month of Ramaḍan. But it is nowhere mentioned in the religious sources what a person

should do if he deliberately eats something while fasting in Ramaḍan. By exercising deductive analogy (Qiyas), the scholars said that such a person should also be obliged to give Kaffarah as prescribed for a person who knowingly had sexual intercourse while fasting. This is what Fiqh means– understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah. In this regard, the method followed by Imam Abu Ḥanifah when dealing with Fiqhi issues should be kept in mind. The Imam himself said: "Indeed I take [legal opinions] from the Book of Allah when I find it. That which I do not find therein, I take from the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger and the authentic narrations from him which have spread between the hands of trustworthy people from trustworthy people. If I do not find it in the Book of Allah, nor the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger, I take the opinion of his companions, [adopting the opinion of] whoever [of them] I wish, and I leave the opinion of whoever [of them] I wish. Moreover, I do not leave their opinion for another's opinion. If the [legal] issue reaches [only] to Ibrahim, al-Sh''bi, al-Hasan, 'Ata, Ibn Sirin, Sa'id ibn al-Musayyab – and he enumerated [other] men – then, [they are] a people who performed ijtihad, so I may perform ijtihad just as they did." This was not a method the Imam created on his own but in doing so, he only wanted to follow what the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) advised Mu'adh when sending him to Yemen as recorded in a famous Ḥadith already mentioned in the beginning of the article. As a general principle, Imam Abu Ḥanifah gave up his opinion if he found a Ḥadith even if it had weakness in its chain of transmission.

The word Fiqh has been used at numerous places in the Qur'an and Ḥadith. While the famous collections of Ḥadith by al-Bukhari, Muslim, al-Tirmidhi, Abu Dawud, al-Nasa'i, Ibn Majah, al-Ṭabarani, al-Bayhaqi, Ibn Ḥibban and Imam

Aḥmad were yet to be compiled, the able disciples of Imam Abu Ḥanifah had already codified his Fiqh in different books. If Fiqh was a condemnable subject, what stopped the great Muhaddithin who compiled the famous books of Ḥadith from dedicating a chapter to condemn indulgence in Fiqh in their respective compilations? They could even write separate treatises on condemnation of Fiqh but can anyone enlighten us if they ever did? The fact is it is nothing but arrogance that makes them deny Fiqh. Otherwise, Fiqh in itself is a scholarly method to infer rulings for unprecedented issues by using deductive analogy undisputedly acknowledged by all the Muḥaddithin and Qur'anic exegetes. Besides, the Ḥanafi Fiqh has the privilege of remaining as official law of the Islamic rules in the past especially during the Abbasside and Ottoman empires. All these regulations were made in light of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In brief, Taqlid of the Four Imams has been a common practice of the Ummah for more than a thousand years and in doing so people always aimed at following the Qur'an and Sunnah as interpreted by the reliable Imams. Therefore, the difference of opinions between the Ummah concerning impetrative issues should not be turned into a war between the truth and falsehood. The scholarly opinions of all the four Imams should be given due respect by all because difference of opinions existed since beginning in the Ummah and probably it will last forever as Imam of Ḥaram Shaykh 'Abd al-Raḥman al-Sudays said when visiting Darul Uloom Deoband, the famous Islamic seminary in the subcontinent. The former ruler of KSA king 'Abdullah not only issued special directives to bring all the different schools of thought in the Ummah closer rather he emphasized on removing the differences. The late King

also organized a series of seminars for the noble task of developing unity in the Ummah. It is our collective responsibility to utilize all that we have to create integrity in the Ummah instead of fighting over interpretative issues. This is the call of life and we all must take head. Otherwise, we will be helping the anti-Islamic elements in their vicious plans against Islam. Let the 95% of the Ummah continue to follow the Four Imams in the legal issues the way they have been doing for long because following the Imams is nothing but striving to follow the Qur'an and Sunnah according to interpretations of the reliable scholars of the Ummah.

2. Imam Abu Hanifa: His Status in Fiqh & Hadith

Brief Sketch of Imam Abu Hanifa's Life

Nu'man bin Thabit bin Nu'man bin Marzuban, better known by his nickname Abu Hanifa, was born in Kufa in 80 A.H. He was of Persian origin. His grandfather Nu'man bin Marzuban was regarded even by the elite class of Kabul as wise and astute man. Marzuban, his great-grandfather, had been ruler of a part of Persia. It is recorded in Imam Abu Hanifa's biography that his father Habit was once brought to Ali, the companion of the Prophet (PBUH), who prayed for him and for his descendants. At that time, Thabit was too young and the prayer that Ali made for his lineage resulted in birth of the highly esteemed scholar Imam Abu Hanifa in the family.

After acquiring basic education in his early age, Imam Abu Hanifa chose trading as his career. He was intelligent and had gifted in-born talent. That is why Shaikh Amir Shabi (17A.H.-104A.H.), a noted *Muhaddith* of Kufa who had the privilege of meeting over 5000 companions of the Prophet (PBUH), suggested him to continue to learn more about *Ilm ul Kalam, Hadith & Fiqh*. Thus he left the trade and dedicated himself to study those subjects. Soon he was acclaimed as the greatest Imam in the academic world.

Abu Jafar Mansoor an Abbasid Caliph was well aware of Imam Abu Hanifa's popularity and tried to force him to become Chief Judge of the State, but Imam Abu Hanifa declined and swore not to accept the post. This invoked the anger of the caliph and finally Imam Abu Hanifa was

detained in jail in 146A.H. Even there, the indomitable jurist continued to teach those who were permitted to come to him. Imam Muhammad the great *Muhaddith* and *Faqih* is one of Imam Abu Hanifa's pupils who learnt from him in jail. The caliph of that period was so scared of his increasing popularity that he poisoned him. When Imam Abu Hanifa felt the effect of poison and became sure that the death was imminent, he went into *Sajdah* and died. He was buried in Khaizran graveyard in Baghdad and almost 50,000 people participated in the funeral.

The man who had the honour of transmitting Ahadith from Prophet's companions and great *Taabi'een* said goodbye to the world in 150 A.H. A brief sketch of his life reveals that he willingly sacrificed his life so that the caliph would not be able to impose his own decisions upon him.

Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) Prophecy about Imam Abu Hanifa:

The famous commentator of the Qur'an, Shaikh Jalaluddin Siuti Sha'fei Misri (849A.H – 911 A.H) quoted in his book *Tabiizus Sahifa fi Manqibil Imam Abi Hanifa,* a number of Ahadith clearly prophesizing about Imam Abu Hanifa:
“If knowledge were found near the star Pleiades, some people of Persia would acquire it even". (Narrated by Bukhari) Similar Ahadith with slightly different words have been recorded by Muslim and other books Hadith. After quoting all these Ahadith, the commentator Shaikh Siuti adds that in his view the Ahadith are obvious prophecies about Imam Abu Hanifa and they are so clear that we need not to look for other evidence.

Shaikh Ibn Al Hajar Al Haitamy Almakki Al Sha'fei (909 A.H - 937 A.H) writes in his book *Al Khairatul Hisan fi Manaqib e Imam Abi Hanif* "Some pupils of Shaikh Jalaluddin Siuti believe the Ahadith mentioned above indicate towards Abu Hanifa, because there was no other man of his calibre in Persia who could reach the level of his greatness.

Explanation: We may differ on who or what has been meant by those Ahadith, but various scholars of different schools of thought including the two quoted above concede the point that it was Imam Abu Hanifa who was prophesied about by the Prophet (PBUH).

Imam Abu Hanifa's Status as a Tabi‘ee

When asked about Imam Abu Hanifa's status as *Tabi'ee*, the renowned scholar of Hadith Hafiz ibn Al Hajar Asqalani commented that Imam Abu Hanifa was born in Kufa in 80 A.H, the period when a group of Prophets' companions were alive. Abdullah bin Aufa (RA) lived in Kufa and Anas bin Malik (RA) in Basra, so it is more probable that Imam Abu Hanifa got a chance to see them. Ibn-e-Saad also reports from his *Sanad* that beside Anas bin Malik (RA) there were many other companions who were alive, so it is likely that Imam Abu Hanifa is a *Tabi'ee* and happened to see a few of them.
Most of the *Muhaditheen* including Khatib Baghdadi, Allama Ibn Hajr, Allama Nawawi, Allama Zahabi, Allama Zain ul Abidin Sakhawi, Hafiz Abu Na'im Asbahani, Imam Dar-Qutni, Hafiz ibn Abdul Bar, Allama ibnul Jauzi etc. are of the opinion that Imam Abu Hanifa got the chance to see Anas bin Malik (RA).

As per the *Muhadditheen*’s given definition of a Tabi'ee, it is not compulsory for a *Tabi'ee* to report Hadith from

Sahabah (Companions). The mere sight of him is enough to be called *Tabi'ee*. Imam Abu Hanifa not only saw the companions of the prophet but also reported Ahadith from a few of them, especially from Anas bin Malik (RA).

The above mentioned opinions of the scholars of *Fiqh* and Hadith, suggest that Imam Abu Hanifa was born at a time when many companions were alive, and got to see some of them. Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) himself prophesied about Imam Abu Hanifa, as described earlier, which is an obvious testimony of his greatness.

Ahadith which Imam Abu Hanifa reported directly from Companions:

Shaikh Abu Ma'shar Abdul Karim bin Abdussamad Al Tabri Al Maqri Al Shafi'ei wrote a booklet in which he listed all the Ahadith that Imam Abu Hanifa reported directly from *Sahabah (Companions)'s (Companions)* like: 1. Anas bin Malik (RA) 2. Abdullah bin Jaza Al Zubaidi (RA) 3. Jabir bin Abdullah (RA) 4. Ma'qal bin Yasar (RA) 5. Waathila bin Al As'qa (RA) 6. A'isha bint Ajr (RA) (May Allah be pleased with them).

Explanation: Although, *Muhadditheen* differ on the exact number of companions from whom Imam Abu Hanifa directly transmitted Ahadith, they all agree on the point that he was a *Tabi'ee*.

Kufa - The Centre of Scholars of Fiqh and Hadith

During the caliphate of Umar Al Farooq (RA), Iraq was conquered. Saad bin Abi Waqqas (RA) a close companion

of the Prophet (PBUH) got permission from Umar Al Farooq (RA) and established the new city of Kufa where he employed the most eloquent people from different Arab tribes. Abdullah bin Masood (RA) also was made a part of the plan. He was knowledgeable and well versed with Sunnah and Islamic jurisprudence. Even other companions time and again referred to him in day to day *Masa'il*. The Prophet (PBUH) said "If a person wants to recite the Qur'an, the way it was revealed, he should follow the method of Ibn-e-Umm-e-Abd" (Abdullah bin Mas'ood). Once the city was fully established, Umar (RA) sent Abdullah bin Masood (RA) to teach Qur'an and Sunnah. He remained there, throughout the reign of Umar and Uthman (RA), teaching Qur'an and Sunnah to the inhabitants of the city. When Ali (RA) was chosen as caliph he shifted *Darul Khilafah* to Kufa and it became a huge hub of education, where a large number of *Sahabah (Companions)* and *Taabi'een*, especially Abdullah bin Masood (RA), and his students were always available to teach Qur'an and Sunnah.

Imam Abu Hanifa inherited the legacy of Abdullah bin Masood through three of his teachers: Shaikh Hammad, Shaikh Ibrahim Nakha'i, and Shaikh Al'qama. He accompanied Shaikh Hammad for 18 years and replaced him in Kufa when he died. Since Imam Abu Hanifa inherited Abdullah bin Masood's legacy, we see his opinions in *Masa'il* of *Fiqh* are generally based on Ahadith narrated by him. For instance, *Rafa Yadain* before & after *Roku* is one of a few issues in which *Ahadith* are contradictory, but Imam Abu Hanifa acts upon the Hadith of Abdullah bin Masood, and says it is not Sunnah.

Composition of Ahadith in Caliphate of Umar bin Abdul Aziz and Imam Abu Hanifa

Umar bin Abdul Aziz during his caliphate appointed two prominent scholars of Hadith Shaikh Abu Bakr bin Al Hazam and Shaikh Muhammad bin Shihab Zuhri to collect all *Ahadith* in books. Till then, the Ahadith were not preserved in books. Instead they were learnt by heart. These two were the first who compiled them in books. The Prophet (PBUH) prohibited his companions from writing *Ahadith*, so that they would not get mixed up with the Qur'an. A few *Faqih Sahabah (Companions)*, could distinguish *Ahadith* from the Qur'an, and they were allowed to write them. But in the subsequent period, the rightly guided caliphs collected the Qur'anic verses and shaped them into a book. Now there was no fear of the Qur'an and *Ahadith* being mixed up together. So Umar bin Abdul Aziz commanded *Muhadditheen* to compile *Ahadith* in books from *Ahadith* that were preserved in the hearts of various people.

This first collection consisted mostly of the *Ahadith* that were attributed to the Prophet (PBUH) by two narrators in the middle; the *Tabi'ee* and the *Sahabi*. Some were attributed even by one narrator. Since the period was nearer to the period of the Prophet (PBUH) and the narrators were either *Sahabi* or *Tabi'ee* there was no possibility of the Hadith, being weak or false.

At that time this collection was available for Imam Abu Hanifa. So he derived all his *Shar'i Masa'il* from it. In general, he got the *Ahadith* which reached the Prophet (PBUH) by two narrators in the middle, he also narrated

Hadith with one narrator but they are few. The *Ahadith* with two narrators in the middle are called **Thuna'i**. These types of *Ahadith* are considered of highest quality but they are not available in any of *Bukhari Muslim* etc. Bukhari records 22 *Ahadith* with three narrators (*Thulasiyat*). Out of them 20 are reported by the pupils of Imam Abu Hanifa.

Islamic Regime from 80 A.H to 150 A.H & Imam Abu Hanifa

Imam Abu Hanifa, as mentioned earliar, was born in 80 A.H. during the regime of the Umayyad caliph Abdul Malik bin Marwan. Abdul Malik died in 86 A.H. six years after Imam Abu Hanifa's birth. Then, his son Walid bin Abdul Malik took over the regime. He reigned for 10 years and died in 96 A.H., vacating the place of governance to his brother Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik. The new caliph Sulaiman could only rule for 3 years and died in 99A.H, but prior to his death he chose another member of the family, Umar bin Abul Aziz, who was not his son nor his brother, for the caliphate. This was a strange decision and thus people were surprised by it. However, they were happy. Umar bin Abdul Aziz ruled for a short span of 2 years & 6 months (99A.H-101A.H), but his regime was so just and fair that it reminded people of the caliphate of rightly guided caliphs and earned him the title of the fifth rightly guided caliph.

The authors of history attribute many valuable achievements to Umar bin Abdul Aziz, but the most significant of all was his collection of *Ahadith* which has already been mentioned. Imam Abu Hanifa was now 19-21 years old and witnessed the period when Ahadith were being collected in books.

He continued to live in Kufa through most of the remaining period of the Umayyad caliphate, but in the last days of the caliphate he migrated to Makkah due to some differences between him and the government. He lived for 7 years in Makkah. Then, he again came back to Kufa when the Umayyad caliphate was finished and the new governance of the Abbasid caliphate was established.

Abu Jafar Al Mansour the Abbasid caliph offered Imam Abu Hanifa the post of Chief Judge of the state, but he refused because he knew well that Al Mansour was not sincere and his only intention was to enhance his regime. Incensed by his refusal, the ruler had Imam Abu Hanifah arrested, locked in prison and tortured. He was never fed nor cared for. Even there, the indomitable jurist continued to teach those who were permitted to come to him until he died in the prison in 150 A.H. Imam Ahmad bin Hambal very often wept when he recalled the torture Imam Abu Hanifa went through at Al Mansour's hand and prayed for him (Al Khairatul Hisaan: Vol 1, Page 59).

Imam Abu Hanifa and Science of Hadith

The Ahadith transmitted through Imam Abu Hanifa are rare in the famous books of Hadith and that is why some bigoted groups of people are apt to believe that he knew little about *Ahadith*. In fact this opinion is based on hatred and prejudice that the enemies of Imam Abu Hanifa have deep rooted in their hearts. The man who learnt Science of Hadith when he was only 20 year old, lived in the golden period of the companions, *Taabi'een* and *Tab-e-Taabi'een*, and got the *Ahadith* of the Prophet through only one or two narrators in the middle. He spent eighteen years of his life with pupils of the great *Faqih* Abdullah bin

Masood (RA), and lived in the period of Umar bin Abdul Aziz when *Ahadith* were being collected. Abu Hanifa learnt the Science of Hadith from various Scholars of Kufa, Basrah, Baghdad, Makkah and Medina who were the great *Muhadith* of all time. He derived thousands of *Masa'il* from the Qur'an and Hadith, played a vital role in composition of *Fiqh*, and produced a large number of scholars who enlightened the world with their Islamic knowledge. How it is possible that a man of such calibre and attribute was ignorant or knew little about Hadith. It is, as if we say that Abu Bakr (RA), Umar (RA) and Uthman (RA) did not know much of Hadith, and that is why their narrations are rare in the books. While it is obvious to everyone that all three of them were closer to the Prophet (PBUH), they had their own reasons for not narrating all what they heard from him. Similarly, Imam Abu Hanifa was as great a *Muhaddith* as he was a *Faqih*.

The Famous Books of Ahadith and Imam Abu Hanifa

The famous books of *Ahadith* like Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmizi, Abu Da'ood, Nasa'i, Ibn-e-Majah etc. were written almost 100 years after the demise of Imam Abu Hanifa. Even their authors, the majority of whom were pupils of Imam Abu Hanifa's pupils, were not born at his time. But Imam Abu Yousuf and Imam Muhammad the two acclaimed pupils of Imam Abu Hanifa collected his *Ahadith* as well as lessons of *Fiqh* and shaped them into books. Most of them are still available. If we compare these books with others, we will find them more authentic and reliable as they consist of *Ahadith* which reach the Prophet (PBUH) through only two narrators in the middle.

Teachers of Imam Abu Hanifa

The biography authors count almost 4000 senior scholars from whom Imam Abu Hanifa learnt. He himself says: "There is not a single *Muhaddith* in Kufa and Basra that he has not got benefit from". For more detail, read Biography of Imam Abu Hanifa. Here is a short list of his teachers: Shaikh Hammad bin Abi Sulaiman, Shaikh Ata bin abi Rabah, Shaikh Ikrama Barbari, Shaikh Imam Auza'I, Shaikh Imam Makhool and two of the seven famous *Faqih* of *Al Medina Al Munawwarh*.

Students of Imam Abu Hanifa

Allama Shibli Numani mentions in 'Siratun Numan' that the circle of Imam Abu Hanifa's class was even wider than border of the contemporary caliph's governance. Imam Shafi'e says "Those who aspire to be perfect in *Fiqh*, should read Imam Abu Hanifa's *Fiqh*". He also says: "If he had not been the student of Imam Muhammad (Pupil of Imam Abu Hanifa) he would not have had the high status in *Fiqh*". The list of his pupils is so large that this small article is not adequate, that is why, it is better to name only a few, who were closer to him and continued to teach as per his *Maslak*. 1. Imam Abu Yousuf 2. Imam Muhammad bin Hassan Al Shaibani 3. Imam Zufar bin Huzail 4. Imam Yahya bin Sa'id Al Qattan 5. Imam Yahya bin Zakariya 6. Muhaddith Abdullah bin Mubarak 7. Imam Wakee bin Al Jarrah Imam Da'ood Al Ta'i etc.

The Collection of *Fiqh*

Scholars have defined the Science of *Fiqh* in different words, but the common point of all the definitions is to understand Islamic law in the light of Qur'an and Hadith.

Before we understand the *Fiqh-e-Hanafi*, we need to know an important principle that Imam Abu Hanifa set for himself. He said, “If I want to know a ruling of *Shari'ah* about an issue, I first see Qur'an and Hadith. If that issue has not been mentioned in both of them, I search the sayings or actions of the companions. If it is also not there, I go through the *Fatawa* of others, and think of my own *Qiyas or Ijtihad*.” He further says, “If I get a Hadith (though weak in Sanad) on a particular issue I always prefer Hadith over my own *Ijtihad*.” Imam Abu Hanifa did not make this principle on his own account, but he derived it from the famous Hadith in which the Prophet (PBUH) told to Mu’aaz bin Jabal (RA) to do so. Imam Abu Hanifa learnt from three very intimate pupils of Abdullah bin Masood (RA). That is why, the *Fiqh-e-Hanafi* as whole is based on his *Ahadith*. He was a *Faqih* and people, even when the Prophet (PBUH) was alive, turn to him in *Masa'il* of *Shari'ah*. He taught Qur'an and Hadith in Kufa. Shaikh Alqama bin Qais and Shaikh Aswad bin Yazid were his two closest students. Once he said that whatever he learnt from the Qur’an and Hadith, he taught to Alaqam and now his knowledge was no more than Alqama's.

When both Shaikh Alqama and Shaikh Aswad died, Shaikh Ibrahim Nakha'i was chosen to become their successor in Kufa. He made so many valuable contributions to the *Fiqh* that people started calling him the *Faqih* of Iraq. The most significant achievement of Shaikh Ibrahim Nakha'i, as *Fuqaha* write, was a collection of *Fiqh* that was later shaped into books by Abu Hanifa's pupils, especially by Imam Muhammad, Imam Yousuf and Imam Zufar. These books are still available.

Explanation: Today, some people read a few pages of Hadith and feel themselves inclined to denial of *Fiqh*. But the fact is, to understand the Qur'an and Hadith, and derive *Masa'il* of *Shari'ah* from them is called *Fiqh*. Moreover, the pupils of Imam Abu Hanifa had composed the *Fiqh-e-Hanafi* even before books like Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmizi, Abu Da'ood, Nasa'i, Ibn-e-Majah, Tabrani, Baihaqi, etc. came into existence. So, if the *Fiqh* was of no importance, the authors of those books of *Ahadith* would definitely have rejected it.

Point: If we go through the history, we will find that all the previous governments, in particular Abbasid and Umayyad, followed the *Fiqh-e-Hanafi* in 75 percent of their judicial and civil laws. Even today, the judicial laws in majority of Muslim countries are based on *Fiqh-e-Hanafi.*

The Opinions of Islamic Scholars about Imam Abu Hanifa

The previous chapters have clarified Imam Abu Hanifa's status as *Muhaddith* and the contributions he made towards *Fiqh*. Now, this chapter describes the opinions, *Ulama-e-Ummat* hold about him.

- Imam Mis'ar bin Kidam (153 A.H.) often told the people that he had not envied any of the men of Kufa except two persons: Imam Abu Hanifa & his *Fiqh*, and Shaikh Hassan bin Salih & his piousness (Taarikh-e-Baghdad Vol: 14, Page: 328).
- Imam Auza'i the *Faqih* and *Muhadith* of Syria (157 A.H.) used to say: "Imam Abu Hanifa knows the complicated issues better than any other man of knowledge". (Manaqib-e-Kurdi, Page: 90).

- Imam Da'ood Al Ta'i (160 A.H.) said: Imam Abu Hanifa has got knowledge that touches the heart of believers (Al Khairat Al Hisaan, Page: 32).
- Once Imam Sufyan Thori (167 A.H.) told a man who had just visited Imam Abu Hanifa that he had been fortunate to meet the greatest *Faqih* on the surface of earth (Al Khairat Al Hisan, Page: 32).
- Imam Malik bin Anas (179 A.H) often confessed that he had not seen a man like Imam Abu Hanifa. (Al Khairat Al Hisan, Page: 28).
- Imam Waki bin Al Jarrah (195 A.H.) said that he had not met a *Faqih* greater than Imam Abu Hanifa.
- Imam Yahya bin Mueen (233 A.H.) generally delivered *Fatwa* in accordance with what Imam Abu Hanifa had said and memorised his *Ahadith* (He heard a number of Imam Abu Hanifa's Hadith) (Jami Bayanul Ilm by: Allama Ibnul Bar Vol: 2 Page: 149).
- Imam Shafi'e (204 A.H) says we all need Imam Abu Hanifa in Fiqh. If a man wants to become perfect *Faqih*, he is required to study his *Fiqh* (Taarikh-e-Baghdad Vol: 23 Page: 161).
- Imam Muwaffaq bin Ahmad Makki referred to Imam Bakr bin Muhammad Zaranjri (152 A.H) that he had told him that Imam Abu Hanifa's book 'Kitabul Aathar' was a selection, out of 40000 Ahadith (Manaaqib Imam Abu Hanifa).

The topic in question is indeed very vast. It requires volumes to cover all aspect of Imam Abu Hanifa's life and his contributions towards Hadith and *fiqh*. Here, in this article I have made a humble attempt to collect the summarised data related to Imam Abu Hanifa and remove wrong perception of few people regarding his knowledge

about Hadith. Allama Jalaluddin Siuti wrote a comprehensive biography of Imam Abu Hanifa titled *“Tabiizus Sahifa fi Manaqibil Imam Abi Hanif”*. For detailed information on the subject, I advise readers to read this book.

Author's Introduction

Dr. Mohammad Najeeb Qasmi is an alumnus of Darul Uloom Deoband and Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Beside hundreds of short Islamic articles that he keeps contributing to various websites, daily newspapers and monthly magazines, he has authored so far 16 books in Urdu and his 14 books have been translated into English & Hindi. He also organizes Hajj Orientation programme once in a year at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to provide accurate guidance to the pilgrims.

He belongs to an educated family of Sambhal, UP, India. His grandfather Maulana Mohammad Ismail Sambhali was a freedom fighter and a renowned scholar of *Hadith*. He taught *Bukhari* for 17 years in different institutes of India, whereas his maternal grandfather Mufti Musharraf Hussain worked in various Madaris in India as chief Mufti and *Muhaddith*.

After completing Islamic studies and theology at Darul Uloom Deoband in 1994, Dr. Najeeb Qasmi joined Jamia Millia Islamia University (JMI), New Delhi where he graduated in Arabic and two courses of translation (Arabic into Eng & Vice Versa). He also completed MA in Arabic from Delhi University (DU).

Dr. Mohammad Najeeb Qasmi has been awarded PhD from JMI in 2014 on the topic الجوانب الأدبية والبلاغية والجمالية النبوي من الصـــحيحين في الحديث under the supervision of Prof. Shafiq Ahmad Khan Nadwi & Prof. R. I. Faynan. Dr. Najeeb Qasmi has been working in Riyadh since 1999.

The mobile application (Deen-e-Islam) of his website (www.najeebqasmi.com) is spreading the message of Islam in Urdu, Hindi & English languages. This App is a collection of his 200 articles on different topics, 100 speeches and seven books. This App is available in Play Store as well as Apple Store which can be easily downloaded to a supporting device within 2 minutes even in urban and rural areas of India & Pakistan.

A similar App for Hajj and Umrah (Hajj-e-Mabroor) is also launched. All the issues related to Hajj and Umrah are presented through this App in Urdu, English and Hindi. Once the App is installed, pilgrims will no longer need to carry books of Hajj and Umrah. They can get information using that App and perform their Hajj or Umrah in Sunnah way. The App includes nine speeches, a presentation on how to perform Hajj and Umrah and 23 articles. If App is installed in the mobile phone, pilgrims can use it while being in Makkah, Mina, Muzdalfah and Arafat.
Various famous Ulamas of Indo-Pak, religious institutions and professors of several universities have also recommended to use both Apps (First Islamic mobile Apps of the world in three languages) by writing testimonials in favour of it.

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IN URDU LANGUAGE:

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زکوٰۃ وصدقات کے مسائل، فیملی مسائل، حقوق انسان اور معاملات، تاریخ کی چند اہم شخصیات، علم وذکر

IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE:

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